March comes in like a lion

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3月のライオン

March comes in like a lion
Chica Umino

羽海野チカ
将棋監修●先崎学八段

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This is a work of fiction. There is no connection to actual people, groups, or events whatsoever.

Chapter 84

Summer Vacation (1)

3月のライオン

March comes in like a lion
Chica Umino

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I JUST LOVE THE SANGATSU TOWN FESTIVAL.

THAT WAS SO MUCH FUUUN...

WHEEEW

SFX: PHAAAN...

SFX: MIIIIN MIIIN MIIIN (CICADAS CHIRPING)

I'D SAY THIS IS WHAT THEY CALL 'GREAT PAINS BUT ALL IN VAIN.'

AFTER GETTING OURSELVES DRENCHED IN SWEAT LIKE THAT, THIS IS ALL THE NET PROFIT WE HAVE...

ACTUALLY, YOU TWO SET EVERYTHING TOO HIGH A PRICE AND GAVE TOO MUCH AWAY.

SUCH A PITY!

THOUGH I WISH WE'D PREPARED MORE SYRUP.

I NEVER WOULD HAVE GUESSED WE'D HAVE SOLD OUT BEFORE 8 O'CLOCK...

BACHI BACHI BACHI

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THOSE EYE-CATCHING GOODS REALLY ARE HUGE FOR BRINGING IN THE CUSTOMERS!
WE SOLD OUR STAPLE SWEETS REALLY WELL, TOO.
THANKS TO ALL THOSE PEOPLE COMING
LIKE HOW IF A SUPERMARKET SAYS THEY HAVE MILK AT 128 YEN A CARTON, THAT GETS ME THERE.☆
Or something like ham at 60 yen for 100 grams or 98 yen for a can of tomatoes ...
And then of course I'll end up buying other things!
-----BUT
ALL THOSE CUSTOMERS SHOWING UP IN DROVES
REALLY GETS MY BLOOD PUMPING.

WERE REALLY PRETTY GOOD WHEN IT CAME TO BUSINESS.
YOUR MOM AND GRANDMA
THEY ALWAYS HAVE A LINEUP FOR SWEET THINGS, TO SOUR THINGS, AND ALL KINDS OF OTHER THINGS.

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THOSE BAGS WITH THE HUGE RIBBONS WERE SO CUTE.

THE NYANKO-YAKI AND BONBORI-YAKI.

I REMEMBER.

I WANTED TA SHOW YOU TWO.

I WAS THINKIN' HOW IMPORTANT THIS WAS DURING THE FESTIVAL.

T/N: NYANKO-YAKI = KITTY CAT GRILLED TREAT.

BONBORI-YAKI = PAPER HAND LANTERN GRILLED TREAT.

IT WAS SO MUCH FUN.

I USED TO HELP OUT BY PUTTING EVERYTHING IN BAGS.

SHE ALWAYS USED TO SAY 'PUT IN THE EFFORT AND YOU WON'T HAVE TO SPEND ANY MONEY.'

HUUUH?

IT'S OKAY ?!

REALLY ?!

YOU'RE FREE TO TRY AGAIN NEXT YEAR.

MM.

YOU TWO DID PRETTY DARN GOOD FOR YOUR FIRST TIME.

BUT YOUR FINESSE AND INSIGHT STILL HAVE A WAYS TO GO...

OF COURSE SALES AND THAT SORTA THING WERE GREAT.

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I-I'VE GOTTA GO COME UP WITH A MENU RIGHT AWAY!
I'LL MAKE A GREAT LINEUP JUST LIKE MOM AND GRAND-MA!!
I'LL DO MY BEST!!
HUOOOOOOH
Hina! Calm down!
AND ANYHOW, FIRST YOU HAVE TESTS TO STUDY FOR!!
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE ABOUT YOUR FIRST CHOICE OF SCHOOLS?
Ah, oh, yeah!! That's right!!

SFX: GASHINH GATANN

TOMORROW IS YOUR SUMMER TESTING DAY. IT'S SUMMER VACATION, BUT STILL A SCHOOL DAY, RIGHT?
DID YOU STUDY EVERYTHING YOU HAD TO?
Ah, yeah.
I think so? Er, I've just got a little left...
-----Oh, right. Onei-chan, what do we do about jelly?
HYAAAA!
YOUR HANDS AREN'T MOVING!!
WRAP IT ALL UP QUICK-LY!!
I FEEL BAD FOR THE DORAYAKI!
三日月堂
Ah, okay!!
I'm sorry, Ojii-chan!

SFX: MIIIN MIIIN (CICACAS)
I CANNNN'T!
SFX: GAKU GAKU BURU BURU... (TREMBLING)
That's just too much for me!
I can't!! Me? Homeroom teacher for 3A?!! I really, really can't!!
I-I-I
I just can't!!
SFX: ZAKU ZAKU BURU BURU... (TREMBLE)
I'LL BE WITH YOU FOR NOW, TOO.
C'MON NOW, YOU'LL BE PERFECTLY FINE. ...Probably.
AWAWA WAWA WAWA...
It's too heavy a burden!
I... I HONESTLY DO NOT THINK I COULD GO HEAD TO HEAD WITH HER, YOU KNOW?
You've seen it, haven't you? The threatening attitude that Takagi mother takes?!
YOU'RE ENTRUSTING A MIDDLE SCHOOL THIRD YEAR CLASS'S ALL-IMPORTANT LAST SEMESTER TO SOME THIS YOUNG?!
WH-WHAAAAAT?! A NEW HOMEROOM TEACHER...?
WHAT IS THE SCHOOL'S OPINION ON THIS MATTER?!
SFX: WAAHH
I CAN'T!! I'M STILL A NEWBIE HERE!!
WELL IF YOU'RE A NEWBIE I'M AN OLDBIE!!
AND ANYHOW, IT'S PHYSICALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO BE HOMEROOM TEACHER FOR 2 CLASSES!!
I CAN'T WATCH OVER 90 STUDENTS ALONE! AND I HAVE HEAD-OF-YEAR DUTIES ON TOP OF THAT!!

AND THIS TALK YOU HAD WITH TAKAGI... HOW LONG DID THIS GO ON FOR?
I TOLD YOU, DIDN'T I?
'GETTING THEM TO UNDER-STAND WHAT THEY DID' IS PART OF OUR JOB.
...
AND YOU'LL HAVE TO EXCUSE ME BUT,
THERE'S NO USE TALKING TO HER ANYMORE.
SHE'S DECIDED THAT SHE'S 'REFUSING' TO FEEL GUILTY ABOUT WHAT SHE'S DONE AT ALL.
WHY DO WE HAVE TO GO THIS FAR?
IT'S RATHER ODD.
WE'RE GIVING ALL THIS CLOSE ATTENTION TO 'THE PERSON THAT DID THE BOTHERING'.
AND SAKURA CHIHO, THE ONE THAT WAS BULLIED, NOT ONLY CHANGED SCHOOLS,
BUT SHE STILL ISN'T EVEN GOING TO SCHOOL WHERE SHE IS NOW, YOU KNOW?
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AS NEW HOMEROOM TEACHER, I'LL LAY EVERYTHING OUT IN THE OPEN.
HOW ABOUT I WRITE IT ON HER STUDENT REPORT?
KOMI-GAWA...
'SELF-RIGHTEOUS AND SHOWS A STRONG AGGRESSIVE ATTITUDE TOWARDS OTHERS '
'SHE TAKES LEADERSHIP ROLES IN GROUPS
AND CAUSES LARGE-SCALE PROBLEMS INSIDE CLASS'!!!
E-EVEN IF I TAKE HER AT HER WORD
THAT SHE REALLY DIDN'T PURPOSEFULLY ACT MALICIOUSLY
I MEAN
AT THIS POINT
IT REALLY DOESN'T MAKE A DIFFERENCE WHETHER SHE HAD BAD INTENTIONS OR NOT!
— IF YOU CAUSE SOMETHING,
YOU HAVE TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR IT!
THAT'S SOMETHING I FIRMLY BELIEVE!
SHE SHOULD PAY A PRICE!
— IF SHE DOESN'T

SFX GARAH
IT JUST WOULDN'T BE RIGHT, WOULD IT?!
HEY, SENSEI,
DID YOU FIND AN ANSWER?

THE REASON WHY EVERYBODY HAS TO DO THEIR BEST AND WORK SO HARD.
DID YOU FIND IT?
WELL,
I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT A LOT SINCE THEN.
AND...

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I couldn't find the answer.
SFX: MIIIN MIIIN M IN JIIIWA JIIIWA
—— BUT WHEN I REALLY GOT DOWN TO IT, I HONESTLY COULDN'T FIND A SINGLE REASON.
I RACKED MY BRAINS OVER IT,
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
YOU COULDN'T ?
HUH ?
ALL I EVER THOUGHT WAS 'PUTTING IN EFFORT' IS EXHAUSTING, BUT IT'S 'JUST SOMETHING YOU HAVE TO DO...'
I WONDER WHY THAT IS...
—— YEAH, WHEN I THOUGHT ABOUT IT, I REALIZED I NEVER HAD A PROBLEM WITH THAT.
IT'S QUITE AN ODD THING..

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—I THINK I PROBABLY JUST ALWAYS WANTED TO BECOME 'A BETTER PERSON THAN I AM NOW...'
NOW THAT I'M THE AGE I AM, I FINALLY FEEL FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART. 'YEAH, THAT SAYING REALLY IS TRUE.'
THAT I DON'T EVEN REMEMBER WHO I HEARD IT FROM OR WHERE I READ IT AT THIS POINT.
IT WAS A PHRASE DRILLED INTO ME SO MUCH,
AND WHILE I WAS DOING THAT,
I CAUGHT ONTO THE IDEA OF 'EFFORT IS SOMETHING YOU DO FOR YOURSELF'
HAAHH...
LOOKS LIKE THE SUBJECT SUDDENLY SWITCHED TO ME.
SHOULD WE EXTEND THE SESSION?
SFX. KIIN KOOOHN (SCHOOL BELL)
NO
TIME'S UP.
TODAY, MY DUTY AS YOUR TEMPORARY HOMEROOM TEACHER IS OVER...
SFX. KAAAN KOOOHN... KIIIN KOOOHN KAAAN KOOOHN

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SFX: KIIIN KOOON KAAAN KOOOHN KOOOHN.
HEY, TAKAGI.
I KNOW RIGHT NOW YOU'RE PROBABLY SO ANXIOUS YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO
YOU STILL HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING WITH YOUR LIFE, SO YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW YOUR OWN SIZE...
—— THAT'S THE SOURCE OF YOUR ANXIETY.
SENSEI ...?
.....
THE REASON YOU CAN'T PUT EFFORT INTO ANY-THING
IS BECAUSE YOU'RE SCARED OF BEING DISAP-POINTED
WHEN YOU DO LEARN YOUR OWN SIZE
BUT TAKAGI,
IT'S OKAY EVEN IF YOU ARE DISAP-POINTED
ONCE YOU KNOW 'YOUR OWN SIZE,'
YOU'LL FINALLY KNOW 'WHAT YOU SHOULD DO.'
AND ONCE YOU UNDERSTAND YOURSELF,
'WHAT YOU WANT TO DO'
GRADUALLY COMES INTO FOCUS

IF YOU DO THAT...
THEN YOU CAN AT LEAST ESCAPE FROM THAT 'ENORMOUS ANXIETY.'
THAT MUCH,
I CAN VOUCH FOR.

— That night, after the test ended,

I drew lots of pictures

of the pretty-colored sweets that were in my head.

They were overflowing so much

I just couldn't stop...

HURRY, GET IN THE BATH...

HOW LONG ARE YOU GONNA SLEEP?

HINAAA!

SFX: SUPIII SUPIII

SHEESH, WHAT ARE YOU...

HINAAA!

HEY!

IF YOU LEAVE THE ELECTRIC FAN ON YOU'LL CATCH A COLD! OHH...

.....

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Chapter 87 END

3-GATSU NO LION VOLUME 9

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